

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JUNE 27, 2003

AMENDED IN SENATE MARCH 6, 2003

Senate Joint Resolution

No. 3

Introduced by Senators Alarcon and Romero

(Coauthors: Senators Kuehl, ~~Soto, and Vasconcellos~~) *Ortiz, Soto, Vasconcellos, and Vincent*)

(Coauthors: Assembly Members Cohn, Diaz, Dymally, Kehoe, Koretz, Lieber, ~~Montanez, Mullin,~~ *Longville, Montanez, Mullin, Wolk,* and Yee)

January 8, 2003

Senate Joint Resolution No. 3—Relative to the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SJR 3, as amended, Alarcon. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program.

This measure would, among other things, urge the Congress of the United States to increase TANF block grant funding to certain states, allow states to use TANF funds to provide an additional 24 months of TANF eligibility for families who have used 60 months of TANF eligibility, ~~and~~ consider “stopping the clock” on TANF assistance for recipients who are meeting work participation requirements or live in counties with high unemployment rates, *increase funding for the Child Care and Development Block Grant, and give states flexibility to design the most effective strategies to help people secure jobs.*

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, In 1996, the federal government restructured the
2 nation's safety net for poor families, replacing the Aid to Families
3 with Dependent Children (AFDC) program with the Temporary
4 Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant program in an
5 attempt to better transition families toward self-reliance; and

6 WHEREAS, The new welfare law imposed a 60-month time
7 limit on the receipt of federally funded cash assistance, allowing
8 only 20 percent of a state's cases to be exempted for "hardship"
9 reasons; and

10 WHEREAS, In response to the 1996 federal changes, California
11 enacted the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to
12 Kids (CalWORKs) program in 1997, which limits adults, but not
13 children, to 60 cumulative months of cash assistance, with
14 designated exceptions for those unable to work; and

15 WHEREAS, As many as ~~50,000 recipients were expected to~~
16 ~~reach~~ *15,700 recipients were estimated to have reached* the
17 CalWORKs five-year limit on January 1, 2003, with more
18 recipients expected to reach the limit throughout 2003 and beyond;
19 and

20 WHEREAS, Working parents, most in low-paying jobs with
21 few opportunities for self-sufficiency, make up a majority of those
22 who will reach the time limit; and

23 WHEREAS, In many counties, a majority or near majority of
24 parents reaching the time limit are married as well as working,
25 contradicting the stereotypes of idle single parents that underlay
26 the creation of time limits; and

27 WHEREAS, The termination of cash assistance will increase
28 hardships for families, including hunger and the inability to meet
29 housing costs; and

30 WHEREAS, The deepening economic crisis reflected in the
31 decline in the stock market has caused a severe reduction in
32 revenues that threatens vital services for the poor, including
33 subsidized child care; and

34 WHEREAS, California's unemployment rate is at 6.4 percent,
35 making it even more difficult for workers eligible for TANF
36 benefits to obtain more gainful employment in the near future; and

37 WHEREAS, Studies of welfare "leavers" show that leaving
38 welfare usually does not mean living in self-sufficiency; and



1 WHEREAS, The TANF block grant, as enacted in 1996,
2 expired on September 30, 2002, but has been temporarily extended
3 by Congress until ~~March 31~~, June 30, 2003; and

4 WHEREAS, Congress is now considering reauthorization of
5 the TANF block grant as well as the level of, and rules governing,
6 federal funding; ~~now, therefore, be it and~~

7 *WHEREAS, The Legislative Analyst has concluded that the*
8 *reauthorization legislation passed by the United States House of*
9 *Representatives would result in added costs to CalWORKs of*
10 *\$2.15 billion over five years, mostly for child care and employment*
11 *services; and*

12 *WHEREAS, H.R. 4, the reauthorization legislation passed by*
13 *the United States House of Representatives, provides no additional*
14 *TANF block grant funding, and an insufficient amount in child*
15 *care and development funds to meet anticipated demands; now,*
16 *therefore, be it*

17 *Resolved by the Senate and Assembly of the State of California,*
18 *jointly, That the Legislature of the State of California recognizes*
19 *California's pending economic crisis and that reductions in TANF*
20 *funding will further exacerbate economic hardships to working*
21 *families; and be it further*

22 *Resolved, That the Legislature of the State of California*
23 *recognizes that retention of time limits on TANF assistance to*
24 *needy families will not only worsen California's economy, but the*
25 *economies of other states as well; and be it further*

26 *Resolved, That the Legislature of the State of California urges*
27 *the Congress of the United States to do all of the following:*

28 (1) Increase TANF block grant funding to states that, like
29 California, are facing severe shortfalls in their ability to adequately
30 fund services and benefits for low-income families.

31 (2) Allow states to use TANF funds to provide an additional 24
32 months of TANF eligibility for families who have used 60 months
33 of TANF eligibility.

34 (3) Consider "stopping the clock" on TANF assistance for
35 recipients who are meeting work participation requirements or
36 who live in counties with high unemployment ~~rates; and be it~~
37 ~~further~~ rates.

38 (4) *Increase funding for the Child Care and Development Block*
39 *Grant to cover any additional demands for child care created by*
40 *TANF reauthorization and to expand access to low-income*

1 *families who are financially eligible for subsidized care but denied*
 2 *assistance due to a shortage of resources.*
 3 *(5) Give states flexibility to design the most effective strategies,*
 4 *including education and vocational training, to help people secure*
 5 *jobs leading to self-sufficiency; and be it further*
 6 *Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of*
 7 *this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United*
 8 *States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to the*
 9 *Majority Leader of the Senate, and to each Senator and*
 10 *Representative from California in the Congress of the United*
 11 *States.*

